

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: BBAK

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA BANKING COMMISSION INVESTIGATION OF AMOS DAWE

REF: HONG KONG 12351

1. REFTEL REQUESTED INFORMATION ON BONA FIDES OF JOHN H. SHERMAN AND ROGER BORGAN, WHO ARE SEEKING INFORMATION FROM HKG OFFICIALS IN CONNECTION WITH CALIFORNIA BANKING COMMISSION INVESTIGATION OF AMOS DAWE, PRESIDENT OF MOSBERT HOLDINGS LTD. AND ASIA LANDS AND PROPERTIES LTD. RUMORS REGARDING DAWE'S CONNECTION WITH MOSCOW NARODNY BANK COME FROM A SERIES OF ARTICLES IN "TARGET," A LOCAL SCANDAL SHEET USED BY BANKS HERE BECAUSE SOME OF ITS INFORMATION IS OCCASIONALLY ACCURATE.

2. WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHETHER THE CALIFORNIA INVESTIGATION IS ROUTINE AND NORMALLY INCIDENT TO A CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP OF A BANK OR IS RELATED TO THE MOSCOW NARODNY BANK RUMORS. HKG OFFICIALS HERE SPECULATE THAT THE INVESTIGATION MAY BE MORE THAN ROUTINE.

3. THIS ISSUE HAS BROADER POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS FOR OBVIOUS REASONS. THE PRC REMAINS INTENSELY SENSITIVE TO ANY HINT OF EXPANDED SOVIET ACTIVITY IN HONG KONG AND OUR CONTACTS HERE ARE WORRIED THAT THESE RUMORS WILL SNOWBALL. IT WOULD BE MOST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HELPFUL IF WE COULD SAY DISCREETLY TO HKG OFFICIALS THAT THE

CALIFORNIA INVESTIGATION IS PURELY ROUTINE AND IN NO WAY RELATED
TO THE NARODNY BANK ISSUE.
CROSS

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